



# The BrainDance

The BrainDance (created by CDC founder Anne Green Gilbert), is another unique aspect of the CDC curriculum that supports learning. All classes at CDC start with this very beneficial warm-up exercise. The BrainDance is composed of eight fundamental movement patterns human beings are programmed to move through from birth through twelve months that wire the central nervous system laying a foundation for appropriate behavior and attention, eye convergence necessary for reading, sensory-motor development, and more.

When patterns are missed due to birth trauma, illness, environment, head injury, or not enough "tummy time" on a non-carpeted surface, there may be missing gaps in a person's neurological development. These gaps can cause neurological dysfunction that may later appear as learning disabilities, behavior disorders, memory problems, sleep disorders, speech, balance or filtering problems, and a host of other difficulties that may disrupt the flow of normal childhood development.

Cycling through these patterns on a daily basis may correct flaws in a person's perceptual process, and reorganize or re-pattern the central nervous system. The BrainDance prepares the brain for learning and helps develop appropriate behavior and social skills. The BrainDance is done as a warm-up at the beginning of dance class but can also be done before tests, performances, and presentations, and during computer work for brain reorganization, recuperation and oxygenation, a centering body/brain warm-up, and to wake-up or calm-down.

## The eight BrainDance patterns and benefits (briefly described) are:

**Breath:** Take four to five deep breaths through the nose and out the mouth filling the belly, diaphragm and lungs. (Brain needs oxygen to function)

**Tactile:** Touch all body parts in various ways – squeezing, tapping, slapping, scratching, brushing. (Bonding and sensory integration)

**Core-Distal:** Stretch away from body center (naval) through fingers, toes, head, tail, and curl back to core center. (Relate to others and to self)

**Head-Tail:** Stretch and curl head and tail (pelvis) together & apart, circle head & pelvis, wiggle spine. (Spine flexibility and neck strength)

**Upper-Lower:** Move the whole upper body while stabilizing with lower body. Move lower-stabilize upper. (Articulate body halves and emotional grounding)

**Body-Side:** Move right side fully while stabilizing left side. Move left–stabilize right. Track eyes right/left. (Articulate body sides and horizontal eye-tracking)

**Cross-Lateral:** Move or connect opposite arm and leg, or cross mid-line of body in many different ways. Track eyes up/down. (Integrate brain hemispheres, vertical eye tracking)

**Vestibular:** Swing, tip, rock, sway, and roll. Spin until dizzy (fifteen seconds), rest, and spin the other way. (Proprioception, balance)